

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2022

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on May 12, 2022 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere St. Richmond VA 23220

Members Present

- Richard Shook, Air Force Association
- Rich Mansfield, Air Force Sergeants Association
- William Aramony, American Legion
- Richard Van Norton, American Veterans
- Glenn Yarborough, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Sha'ron Martin, Fleet Reserve Association
- Jack Hilgers, Legion of Valor
- John Clickener, Marine Corps League
- Monti Zimmerman, Military Officers Association of America
- Vernon Peters, Military Order of the World Wars
- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Terence Moore, Reserve Association of America
- Dan Karnes, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Rick Raskin, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Robert Barnette, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
- Kevin Hoffman, Virginia National Guard Association
- Jose Ramos, Wounded Warrior Project
- Michael Dick, Chairman, Board of Veterans Services
- Jack Lanier, Veterans Services Foundation
- Daniel Gade, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Lauren Augustine, Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
- Mark Atchison, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Michelle Ramos Domingue, Navy Mutual Aid Association

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

- John Cooper, Air Force Sergeants Association
- David Sitler, Reserve Organization of America
- Jay Marts, American Veterans

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Steven Combs, DVS
- Claudia Flores, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS

- Jonathan Patrick, DVS
- Ravi Padma, DVS
- Annie Walker, DVS
- Cassy Russell, DMA

Guests

- MacKenzie Heidelberg, Office of Congresswoman Spanberger
- Catie Robertson, Virginia Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee
- Anne Crittenden, Women Marines Association
- Barry Garber, Newport News Veterans Group
- Julianne Smith
- Frank Richardson, (Attended via zoom)
- Ted Ambasiani

Items included in the Agenda Packet

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes December 15, 2021 meeting
- BVS Report to JLC
- VSF Report to JLC
- VDVS Operations Update

Call to Order

Chairman Denise Williams called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Chair Williams welcomed the Wounded Warrior Project to the JLC and introduced its representative, Mr. Jose Ramos.

Thoughts and meditation

The JLC Chaplain, Mr. Kevin Hoffman, provided thoughts and meditation.

Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guest

The roll was called, and 19 of the 22 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being represented. A quorum was determined. The three *ex officio* members were recorded as present.

Chair Williams welcomed the Wounded Warrior Project to the JLC and introduced its representative, Mr. Jose Ramos. Mr. Ramos provided a brief introduction.

Chair Williams asked the state officials and guests to introduce themselves. Their names and organizational affiliation are recorded above.

Approval of the Agenda (Attachment 1)

Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. Sha'ron D. Martin made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Jack Hilgers to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Approve December 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2021 meeting as drafted. Mr. Kevin Hoffman made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Vernon Peters, to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Reports / Updates

VDVS Operational Update *(Attachment 2)*

Commissioner Daniel Gade provided remarks on the JLC as a key component in legislative initiatives and encouraged aggressive innovation and creativity. He noted the budget work in the General Assembly and further commented on the Suicide Prevention Coordinator position as a key effort in suicide prevention. Commissioner Gade commented that some of the proposed suicide prevention program funding will go to research on military and veteran suicide. He noted other budget initiatives introduced by Governor Youngkin.

Commissioner Gade noted the Objectives and Key Results (OKR) in line with Stay, Work, and Thrive objectives. He further explained some of the OKR initiatives to keep transitioning members in Virginia. On the Work objective, the Commissioner noted V3 efforts and for Thrive, the Commissioner noted the VVFS service line efforts. The Commissioner also commented on new agency initiatives for data gathering and data analyses.

BVS Report *(Attachment 3)*

Chairman Michael Dick of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) provided the BVS report. He noted his participation in the February DVS OKR session. He further noted the April 7 BVS meeting cancellation and the upcoming June 23 meeting.

VSF Report *(Attachment 4)*

Mr. Jack Lanier of the Veterans Services (VSF) presented the VSF report. He commented on the last VSR meeting and noted the nominating committee and fundraising events. The next meeting is scheduled for June 9.

Review of 2022 Legislative Session

Mr. Monti Zimmerman and Mr. John Clickener led the discussion on lessons learned from the 2022 Session. Specifically, Mr. Clickener noted that JLC members should work to have patrons in both chambers for legislative initiatives, keeping in mind fiscal impacts of legislative priorities, if applicable. A summary of 2022 initiatives was provided.

Mr. Zimmerman noted that all JLC members have a duty to follow through on initiatives to include attendance at sub-committee and committee meetings, either in-person or virtually. Chair Williams noted that VSOs can partner on initiatives.

2023 Proposed Initiative

Chair Williams opened the floor to receive proposed initiative topics from VSOs. Several initiative topics were discussed. Mr. Clickener provided a timeline of for white papers and referenced the JLC binder requiring updates and revisions. Mr. Clickener informed the members that the JLC Legislative Committee will put the binder together for the July meeting and reminded members to that each VSO needs a designated alternate.

2022 – 2023 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan

Mr. Clickener requested all white papers detailing proposed 2023 legislative initiatives by July 6 with financial impact statements if applicable. He further commented by August the JLC should inform the Commissioner of any potential budget initiatives. Mr. Clickener proposed the JLC get time on the Governor's calendar given their charge to be an advisor to the executive branch. By September / October, Mr. Clickener informed the members they will need patrons for their initiatives.

New Business

Chair Williams informed the members that interim votes taken in December for officer positions needed to be ratified and asked for a motion to approve the interim selections for the Legislative Officer, Assistant Legislative Officer, and Chaplain positions. Robert Barnette made a **motion, seconded** by Glen Yarbrough to ratify the interim votes from December 2021. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman reported on the Constitution and By-Laws review with recommended changes. Information will be sent to members in advance of a vote during the July meeting.

Other New Business, Open Discussion, and “Good of the Order” reports

Mr. David Sitler from the Reserve Organization of America presented Chief Deputy Commissioner Steve Combs and Ms. Glendalynn Glover with an ROA coin thanking them for their service to the JLC. ROA is celebrating 100 years of existence with the commemorative coin.

Mr. Jonathan Patrick shared information on suicide prevention tools to include medication lock boxes and gun locks. Mr. Patrick directed members to a resource table to obtain additional information

Public Comment

Three members from a Tidewater area veterans group thanked the JLC for allowing them to attend and asked where the white papers with proposed initiatives will be posted. Chair Williams informed them the papers are posted on the JLC webpage

Chair Williams reminded members about the Women Veterans Summit in June.

Adjourn

Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

The next regular business meeting is Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 10 a.m. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Virginia War Memorial.

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ATTACHMENT 1

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

**May 12, 2022
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Virginia War Memorial**

AGENDA

- I. Opening, Meeting Notes, and Pledge of Allegiance – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Opening Thoughts & Meditation, *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chaplain* (10:05 – 10:08)
- III. Roll call and introduction of member, quorum determination, and introduction of guests – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:08 – 10:20)
- IV. Approve Agenda – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:20 – 10:22)
- V. Approve December 15 meeting minutes – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (10:22 – 10:25)
- VI. Virginia National Guard Update – *MG Timothy Williams, The Adjutant General* (10:25 – 10:40)
- VII. VDVS Operational Update – *Daniel Gade, VDVS Commissioner* (10:40-11:00)
- VIII. Reports (11:00 – 11:15)
 - a. Board of Veterans Services (BVS) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) – *John Lesinski, VSF Chairman*
- IX. Review of 2022 Session – *John Clickener, Interim Legislative Officer* (11:15 – 11:30)
- X. Proposed 2023 JLC Initiative Discussion – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:30 – 11:50)
- XI. Way-ahead and work plan for 2022-2023 – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (11:50- 12:00)
- XII. New Business (12:00 – 12:15)
 - a. Ratification of Officer Nomination , *Denice Williams, JLC Chair*
 - a. Legislative Officer
 - b. Assistant Legislative Officer
 - c. Chaplain
 - b. Report on the Constitution and by-Laws – *Review Committee*
- XIII. Public comment period – *Denice Williams, JLC Chair* (12:15 – 12:20)
- XIV. Closing remarks and prepare for next meeting –*JLC Chair* (12:20 – 12:30)
- XV. Adjourn (12:30)

ATTACHMENT 2

VDVS Operations Update



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Veterans Services

Daniel M. Gade, PhD
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0220
Fax: (804) 786-0302

Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operations Update for the Joint Leadership Council

May 12, 2022

I am deeply grateful for the long and productive partnership between JLC and DVS, and am committed to making this relationship even more successful. The final State budget is still pending, however VVFS is planning for important capacity increases in suicide prevention including the addition of a new *Suicide Prevention Coordinator* (2022 JLC top legislative priority) position which will enhance internal and community staff training (i.e. suicide prevention/risk screening and lethal means safety) and direct services delivery; Federal, State, and local stakeholder engagement; and data coordination.

Our activities in DVS are oriented around the Governor's campaign pledge to make Virginia the best place for veterans to "live, work, and raise a family." Operationally, that means that we are oriented around a rephrased version of that objective- we want veterans to "Stay, Work, and Thrive". With my senior leadership team and the Governor's office, we are currently working on stating and refining the specific tasks (called "key results") that will allow us to accomplish those objectives. In layman's terms, we want Virginia veterans to return to Virginia after their service; we want to keep as many veterans who leave service in Virginia here after that service; we want to help veterans get jobs or grow their businesses; and we want to provide the ancillary services that will assist them in their own thriving.

We held a strategic planning session on February 25th, focused on developing these service-line Objectives and Key Results (OKRs). The Governor and Secretary joined us for one of the afternoon out-briefs, noting DVS is among the first state agencies tackling this collaborative goal-setting management methodology.

Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program staff returned to regional offices and expanded in person outreach opportunities beginning February 1, 2022. There has been a significant increase in new clients starting in January 2022. In April, there were 129 new clients (an increase of 100%) compared to April 2021 (64 new clients). The total number of clients (including new and existing clients) that VVFS served was 42% higher in April 2022 (372) compared to April 2021 (262). The number of returning clients in the last year has been higher than pre-pandemic years and many of them have had increasingly complex service needs. In April 2022, veterans and families needed assistance with resource connections for housing needs (48%), behavioral health support (10%), benefits assistance (8%), employment (7%), and homeless assistance (6%).

101 North 14th Street, 17th Floor, Richmond, Virginia 23219
www.dvs.virginia.gov

The Benefits team serviced 3,993 in person appointments and walk-ins during the month of April. This number continues to climb as veterans and family members become aware that we are open full time for in person and virtual service. Benefits submitted 1,863 C&P claims in the month of April.

Benefits partnered with the Veterans Administration in Veteran Experience Action Center Community (VEAC) Event. 22 VSRs were the focal point ensuring this event was a tremendous success for our Virginia Veterans. During this 3-day event we served 587 veterans with immediate responses from the VA and community partners. This is the most of the 8 states participating in this event thus far! We also served 29.1% women veterans. This is "by far" the largest number of women veteran served by population in any other participating state. DVS set many "firsts" in this event. We have 204 new veteran clients as a result of this partnership. Benefits continue to initiate new partnerships and work with Military installations for increased presence during TAP and other transition briefings.

The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) and V3 Transition Programs, working closely with the Virginia Chamber, embarked on a robust Hire Vets Now (HVN) Networking Event calendar. There are 23 networking events scheduled on five different military installations. Six events held so far this calendar year with 391 total service member and military spouse attendees. Each HVN event connects approximately 25 V3 Certified Employers directly to transitioning service members and their families. V3 Transition Coordinators and V3 Regional Program Managers attend all events to ensure quality customer service to service members and military spouses as well as our V3 Certified Employers.

The Military Medics and Corpsmen Program (MMAC) assisted 79 Veterans and 5 military spouses to find healthcare-related employment in the Commonwealth to date in FY22. The program also added three new MMAC Partner Health Systems – The National Neuropathy Center, Kaiser Permanente, and Velocity Health.

The Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI) partnered with the Veterans Services Foundation, Tech 4 Troops, and Altria Group to provide 50 refurbished laptops to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The first delivery (30 computers) occurred on February 3, 2022. The remaining 20 laptops is scheduled for delivery on August 1, 2022.

As of May 3, 2022, The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) processed 3,757 applications, a 44 percent increase from the number of applications processed in May of 2021. The VMSDEP Staff processed all applications in FY22 within 10 calendar days which is 35 calendar days sooner than applications processed in FY21. The 10-calendar-days processing time-frame for applications was accomplished while maintaining a one-business-day response time-frame for voicemails and emails, ensuring callers were able to speak with a representative at time of call-in, and providing ad hoc training to school officials.

The Military Spouse Liaison continues to conduct outreach and advocacy on behalf of military spouses and families in the Commonwealth. During April's Month of the Military Child (MOMC), the Liaison organized an agency-wide Purple Up Day on April 20, and invited V3 employers and GAMVC members to participate as well. Purple Up Day showed support and agency unity for the 200,000 military children that call Virginia home. The Liaison has also created an internal agency working group to create events, services, and resources for military caregivers in support of a proposed proclamation for Virginia to become the 9th Hidden Heroes State with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. She is collaborating with Blue Star Families (BSF) to be the first state to bring the BSF Welcome Week

Campaign statewide to include Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Ft. Lee in welcoming the recently PCS'd military families to those areas this fall.

The annual women veterans pinning ceremony was held in person during the Virginia Women Veteran Recognition Week, March 20-26, 2022 at the Virginia War Memorial. This was the fifth annual celebration with our community partners, V3 employers, Virginia legislators, and local veteran service organizations. Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears joined Senator Jen Kiggans, Delegate Kathleen Murphy, and Delegate Jackie Glass to honor over 70 women veterans with a "Virginia Women Veterans Lead The Way" pin.

The 2022 Virginia Women Veteran summit will be on June 15, 2022, at the Richmond Convention Center. The event theme is "Empowered: Sisters in Arms Inspiring Generations." The focus of the effort in 2022 is to holistically connect women veterans to services. In addition, we want to identify any gaps in services that we can target for enhancement in building partner resources.

We hired the Administrator for the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach and will bring on board the Administrator for the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County next month, with targeted "Month 1" (first residents) in the October/November timeframe. We will be holding community open houses prior to opening, and invite you all to join us.

The Virginia War Memorial will host the 66th Annual Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 30 at 11 a.m. We invite you to join us in person or to watch the broadcast on CBS TV-6 Richmond or streaming on the DVS Facebook page.

Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries will also host special ceremonies on Memorial Day, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin), at 10 a.m. at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk), and at 10 a.m. at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia). We cordially invite you to attend one of these ceremonies.

Sincerely,



Daniel Gade, PhD.

ATTACHMENT 3

Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Report



101 N. 14TH STREET, 17TH FL.
RICHMOND, VA 23219

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MAY 12, 2022

*Michael Dick,
Chairman
Thuraya Kent,
Vice Chair
Victor Angry
David Ashe
Carl Bedell
Senator John Bell
Carl Bess
Paige Cherry
Mario Flores
Delegate Buddy Fowler
Delegate Dan Helmer
Joyce Henderson
James O. Icenhour, Jr.
John Lesinski
Senator Mamie Locke
Delegate Kathleen
Murphy
Kathy Owens
Senator Bryce Reeves
Susan Vervaeke Riveland
Delegate Marcus Simon
Melissa Watts
Denise Williams
Chair, Joint
Leadership Council of
Veterans Service
Organizations
Jack Lanier
2nd Vice Chair, Veterans
Services Foundation
Rick St. John
Vice Chair, Virginia
War Memorial
Foundation
Daniel M. Gade, PhD,
Commissioner, Virginia
Department of
Veterans Services*

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) last met on December 16, 2021. The meeting originally scheduled for April 7, 2022 was cancelled due to the General Assembly Special Session. We will reschedule this meeting for later this year.

We congratulate Kathy Owens on her selection as the Chair of the Board for the Virginia War Memorial Foundation. Mr. Rick St. John, Vice Chairman of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation, will represent Kathy Owens as an Ex officio member of the BVS for future meetings, to avoid any conflict from Ms. Owens' new role as Chair. BVS member, Ms. Jenny Dye, resigned from the Board in January, leaving one vacancy. The Secretary of the Commonwealth's office is working to fill it and received several applications through their webpage.

Several of our members participated in the February 25 VDVS Strategy Session to develop Objectives and Key Results (OKR) for each service line. This effort allowed for collaborative goal-setting, with each service line identifying and setting ambitious goals and associated measurable results. The morning session involved working groups of VDVS staff paired with outside leaders, offering expertise from their industry and life experience. The afternoon was devoted to OKR out-briefs. The Governor and the Secretary joined the team briefly in the afternoon to express their appreciation of the hard work and effort put forth by Commissioner Gade and the entire agency.

Our next scheduled meeting is June 23 at the Virginia War Memorial. We will receive Point of Contact Reports on Benefits, Behavioral health, Suicide Prevention & Rehabilitative Services, Veterans Cemeteries, Women Veterans, Transition & Outreach, and Veterans Care Centers.

We remain committed to our work alongside VDVS and the Joint Leadership Council, and look forward to preparation for the 2023 Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dick
Michael Dick
Chairman

ATTACHMENT 4 **Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report**



VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION **Report to the Joint Leadership Council** **May 12, 2022**

The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees held their quarterly meeting on March 24, 2022 on the Chester Campus of the John Tyler Community College.

Deputy Secretary Jason Pak and Assistant Secretary Jordan Stewart attended the meeting on behalf of Secretary Craig Crenshaw. Deputy Secretary Pak gave regrets from Secretary Crenshaw for his absence. The Deputy Secretary expressed his excitement to have the opportunity to work with VSF and DVS to support Virginia veterans and their families. The Deputy Secretary acknowledged that much has been accomplished, and added there is also an opportunity for growth. The Secretary's office is eager to listen and understand the landscape and learn more about the issues.

Deputy Secretary Pak presented a Women Veteran Pin to the women veterans who serve on the VSF Board of Trustees in recognition of their military service and their time and talents in leadership roles to the Foundation. In the Commonwealth, the third week of March is designated Virginia Women Veterans Week and coincides with the month-long celebration in March of Women's History Month.

Steve Schoenfeld, Executive Director of the Dominion Energy Charity Classic made a presentation regarding the event and Mr. Schoenfeld stated his appreciation for the relationship with VSF and the work that has taken place to benefit the veteran community. VSF is one of the event's beneficiary and has received funding since 2016. Mr. Schoenfeld announced that VSF will once again be a beneficiary this year and he looks forward to working with VSF.

Commissioner Gade provided the DVS report and shared that he will work hand in glove with the VSF, as they are vital to the work of DVS. His number one priority is making the vertical relationship with the Veterans Administration (VA) and the horizontal relationship with constituents, legislators, and VSF mature to create high quality programs. Both DVS and VSF recognize that a strong collaboration will result in successfully identifying veterans along with providing the resources needed now and in the future.

A tripartite meeting that included the Development, Finance and Procedures and Policies Committees took place on February 24, 2022. Committee Chairs, Laura Schmigel, Walter Stosch and Jack Lanier worked together to combine the efforts of each committee to discuss various matters important to VSF.

The Development Committee continues their work on fundraising and exploring the different path of giving to secure the funding necessary to support DVS programs and the needs of Virginia veterans.

The Finance Committee made recommendations to the Board to approve Commissioner's Gade requests to purchase carillons for each of the Veterans Cemeteries and recliners and TVs for the short term rehab wing at VVCC. Both requests were approved by the Board.

The P&P Committee finished their work on the FY 22 - FY23 P&P work plan.

VSF Chair, John Lesinski recommended for approval of the Board the names of Trustees, Lettie Bien, Allan Burke and Walter Stosch to serve on the 2022 nominating committee. Elections for VSF officers will take place at the June 9, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting.

A number of Community Fundraising events are currently being held. The return of these fundraisers is a welcome return for VSF. These events are essential for increasing funding and an excellent avenue for providing outreach opportunities throughout the Commonwealth.

VSF received a total of \$182,000 in March bringing the FY22 donation total to \$562,000. The March revenue included the generous support of the Dominion Energy Charity Classic along with two bequests that were made to VSF.

The next VSF Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2022 at 11:00 AM. The location is TBD.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Lesinski, Chairman
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation